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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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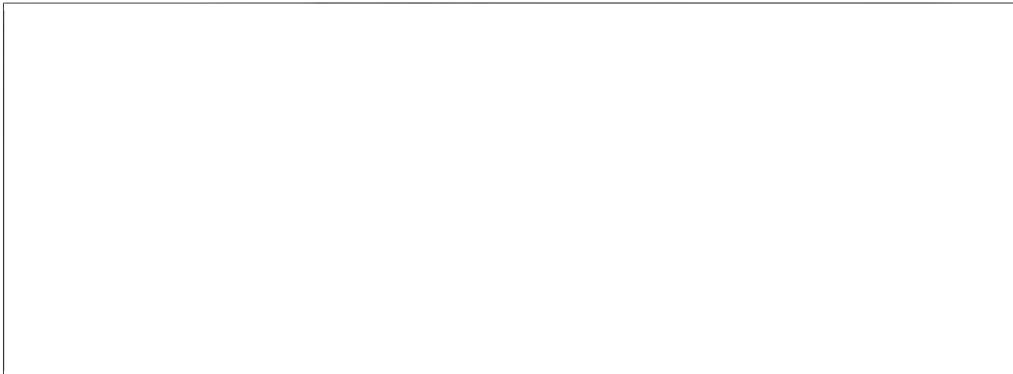


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INFORMATION ON SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND CONDITIONS OF
LIFE IN THE USSR

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2. Psychological effect of STALIN 's personal influence on the Soviet mentality:

[redacted] people outside the Soviet Union did not and do not realise how powerful STALIN was and how enormous was his personal influence on the mentality of an average Soviet citizen. [redacted] the Russian people were accustomed to be ruled by dictators and in the history of Russia there had been many strong and mighty men who through their despotic will and persistence had ruled and formed the mentality of their people. It would be hard to say who was the strongest man among them but [redacted] STALIN was at least quite as powerful if not more so than Peter the Great or Ivan the Terrible.

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The force of STALIN's name was a decisive factor in the life of the Union during the last twentyfive years. [redacted] STALIN possessed an extraordinary knowledge of the Russian psychology in general and of his closest collaborators in particular. He knew how to talk to them, how to deal with them, how to push one against another. His methods were perfectly elaborated and it appears that he studied the people and played a cat and

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mouse game with them

[redacted] all over the Union people were frightened just of STALIN's name. In particular [redacted] in MOSCOW where all officers and civilians employed there with the Central institutions practically lived in constant fear of the "beloved leader". The higher one was established the more one was frightened of his personality. STALIN knew a great deal about various people's personal affairs and weaknesses. But people believed that he knew everything. The Generals well known for their gallantry or their rudeness who were prepared to oppose everyone turned pale and became silent and soft when informed that Yosif Vissaryonovich wished to see them. And Yosif Vissaryonovich knew how to talk to his visitors. [redacted] the example of General CHIMIRIS, Head of the Transport Department in the Defence Ministry, an energetic, able, but incredibly rude man. There were so many complaints of his behaviour that finally STALIN was informed about it and expressed his wish to see him. The General himself was so shaken after his visit to STALIN [redacted]

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[redacted] STALIN was responsible for practically everything that happened in the USSR during the last quarter of a century. He allowed criticism of everyone and everything except himself and the KREMLIN as such. For the self-criticism (SAMOKRITIKA) was an excellent source of information for him and from the "self-criticism" he could choose who and what he needed. Of course the SAMOKRITIKA ended on the Red Square in MOSCOW. The KREMLIN was always right.

[redacted] STALIN made automations and little idols of the Soviet Civilian and Military executive staff who served the great idol - STALIN. (PRI STALINYE MY BYLI AVTOMATY I IDOLY U BOLSHOVO IDOLA).

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The results of this twentyfive years of training are obvious [redacted] In particular [redacted] the last fifteen years (since 1937) were those of the real and the most successful training. During that period an average Russian frightened, terrorised and properly taught, reconciled himself with the system and became politically weak. (ZA POSLYEDNIKH 15 LET RUSSKIY CHELOVEK PRIMIRILSYA I OBNYAK POLITICHESKI).

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[redacted] The nation [redacted] is so weak morally and so terrorised that it would not raise even a finger to destroy the regime until someone from outside pushed it.

This system of political training has also its weak points. The most important of them is that when the "great idol" died all medium and small idols were shaken and lost a great deal of their balance. The other point is that should the leading brains disappear the whole system would collapse at once. [redacted]

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3. The Economic Situation in the USSR:

[redacted] the main reason for constant Soviet economic difficulties and the poverty of the population lies in the enormous efforts made by the whole of the Soviet Union for the industrialisation of the country. [redacted] all planning of development of the heavy industry was wrong from the very beginning of the Sovietisation and Socialisation of Russia.

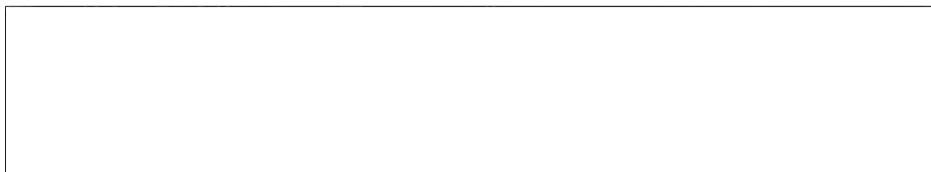
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Russia [redacted] was too weak and too backward to endure all economic experiments introduced by the Soviet Government after the period of Militant Communism (1917-1922). The Soviet Union has been pushed on the wrong track of rapid industrialisation which according to the Government plans ought to be achieved without foreign help. The real catastrophe began when STALIN started his first Five Year Plan and the collective farm system in agriculture.

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Artificial development of heavy industry which was carried out at the expense of light industry and agriculture was disastrous for the light industry, destroyed the economic and social structure of the peasantry and agriculture and impoverished the whole population to such an extent as perhaps never before in modern Russian history.



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The notorious slogan "to overtake and outstrip the capitalist countries" (ДОГНАТЬ И ПЕРЕВЫГНАТЬ) was a real tragedy for the Russian people who did not want to overtake anyone but just to live decently. [redacted]

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Another anomaly of the Soviet economic policy is the fact that the whole system is based on Forced Labour. One can support the development of the economy by Forced Labour provided that one believes that this is real "socialism" but one cannot base the economy on millions of cheap slaves.

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[REDACTED]

These anomalous economic structures, lack of real planning superstructure of the Government apparatus as well as the general inhuman attitude towards the suffering masses of workers, peasants and minor classes of the population, mean that all achievements of the Soviet Union cost an enormous amount of money as well as thousands of human lives and do not improve the everyday life of an average Soviet citizen.

[REDACTED] everywhere, including MOSCOW, poverty and shabbiness. [REDACTED] more or less human conditions of life begin in the Armed Forces from the rank of Captain up wards and among the civilians "from a high ranking leader up".

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[REDACTED] poverty is striking all over the USSR. Railway stations and trains are full of poor, filthy and shabby people travelling God-knows why and where on just seeking a roof where they could spend a night. Of course the main streets of MOSCOW or seaside resorts like SOCHI and others look much better, even quite good, but these spots are not for the average Soviet citizens. Workers are poor and hungry. They earn 500-750 roubles per month and need for an average family 12 roubles per day for bread and potatoes. Even if they could stand such a starvation diet they have no money for clothing, for improvement of their quarters or any amusements. They can only survive.

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4. Corruption:

The difficulties and privations of life as well as the old traditions of corruption result in the moral standard in the Union being extremely low. [REDACTED] "thievery everywhere" (VOROVSTVO VYEZDYE). Workers steal the factory property following the example of their superiors. In the collective farms peasants steal the kolkhoz property. Bribes make life much easier provided that one has enough money with which to bribe. Hooligans, robbers and pickpockets work successfully in the dark streets.

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[REDACTED] money and illegal methods make life in the USSR easier

[REDACTED]

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5. Food:

[redacted] people in the USSR believe that all food shortages in Russia are a consequence of war reserves made by the Government as well as of help given by the USSR to Korea and China.

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In 1951 there were no shortages of food in KIEV and shops were full of manufactured goods. In 1952, except for white bread which was available in sufficient quantities, there were shortages of everything. In order to obtain 250 grammes of butter or some flour people spent usually 12 hours in the queues. At the same time in the small towns in the Ukraine, there was a great shortage of bread. Manufactured goods one could obtain mainly "PO BLATU" (in an illegal way). In particular there was a great shortage of wool.

In GORKIY and in STALINGRAD the situation was much worse than in KIEV. There was a great shortage of everything and even people in the streets looked much worse in all respects than in KIEV.

[redacted] in fact GORKIY and STALINGRAD were always far behind KIEV because the former are much more industrialised than KIEV, being situated in comparatively poor regions.

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6. Accommodation:

[redacted] the lodging problem is everywhere very acute. In particular the situation in GORKIY appears to be hopeless. [redacted] if in KIEV the accommodation problem is far from being good then in GORKIY it is ten times worse and did not improve in comparison with the pre-war period.

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[redacted] the lodging difficulty is also a typical consequence of the wrong economic policy. [redacted] when the Soviet Government started its industrialisation policy there was not enough time and money to build dwellings for the rapidly growing town population. The Government began to build wooden huts for workers instead and in consequence the Soviet Union is at present at least ten years behind schedule in the accommodation problem.

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7. Railways:

[redacted] travel [redacted] comfortably and fast in the very clean "soft" coaches. [redacted] of course the "hard" coaches were neither comfortable nor clean. The speed

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of those "fast" trains was not a very striking one because the approx 1,000 km distance from STALINGRAD to SOCHI via TIKHORYETSKAYA and ARMAVIR was covered in 44 hours and approx 1,600 km distance between SOCHI and KIEV via ROSTOV and DNYZPROPYETROVSK the train covered in 48 hours, i.e. an average speed of 23-33 km per hour.

8. SOCHI:

[redacted] the Black Sea resort SOCHI [redacted] looked like a foreign country". It was clean indoors and outdoors, no shortage of anything and "even the Militia were in clean white uniforms". SOCHI is a first class seaside resort favoured by the big bosses and therefore everything there is better, including prices for fruits which are much more expensive than in MOSCOW.

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9. Anti-Semitism:

[redacted] anti-Semitism is very strong in the USSR. The Jews are hated everywhere and by everyone, in particular in the Armed Forces. [redacted] there is no hostility towards any other nation but Jews. The Russian people are tired of Jews ("YENYI NADOVETI RUSSKOI NAROD").

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10. Religion:

[redacted] the churches in Russia are full of worshippers on Sundays and a considerable number of youths attend church. But children are practically illiterate in religious matters because the parents do not teach them religion, being afraid of persecution.

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Party members visiting churches are reprimanded and if that measure does not work, are expelled from the Party. And an expelled former Party member "can be only a janitor" (TOGDA UZHE TOLKO V DVORNIKI) because no one would employ him.

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